

amusement, and one could hope that some of the audience might be encouraged to think more about problems of child life from the point of view of communal action.

A third gathering was organised by a really efficient and enthusiastic Baby Welcome Committee of some standing. There was a Church service and special sermon on the Sunday, an evening address followed by lantern slides illustrating baby nurture on Monday, a very large afternoon gathering on Wednesday, where sixty-seven babies were entered for the competitions, were undressed, medically examined and classified, another evening entertainment, and finally an "At Home" at the local Baby Welcome on Friday. There is no doubt that real interest was aroused in the neighbourhood. Remarks on housing problems were eagerly followed, especially on the methods for overcoming the difficulty people with large families experience in getting accepted as tenants for a good class of cottage, even when they are willing to pay the rent required. Questions were asked afterwards as to how this point could be met in any national scheme of rural and urban housing. Allusions to the advertisements for servants and employes "married, no family," evidently fell on very understanding ears. My impression was that public opinion was distinctly aroused, and that people began to feel that such matters not only ought to be, but could be, dealt with through the collective action of the community. The selective action of the War in lowering the quality of available fathers for the next generation was evidently partly appreciated as a possible cause of racial degeneration in the future.

At the judging of the babies in the afternoon, the system of marking was carefully explained—so many marks being allotted to each point, such as the condition of the skin, of the hair, of the teeth, firmness of the flesh, etc. All the children were undressed in the big hall, and the mothers followed the observations of the doctor and matron with keen interest, especially when any defect was considered a disqualification. I think they learned a very great deal, and they were most anxious for advice and help, both at the time and afterwards, as to how best they might overcome the weak points noticed in their children.

The children of the upper classes who were present had obviously a great advantage, whether by inheritance or nurture, in freedom from such defects as adenoids, decayed teeth, etc. They were also larger, heavier, and better nourished. It was also clear that in each class, where children of the labourers were concerned, the awards tended to go to the youngest, probably because there had been less time and opportunity for the special defects of unguarded childhood to develop.

My impression of the week's celebrations was that the local committee in each case held in it in their hands to make the celebration of permanent eugenic advantage or not, but that in nearly every case the mothers were encouraged in their efforts to bring up their children to be as healthy as circumstances permit. The status of maternity also received a distinct and, let us hope, a more than temporary uplift.

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Since only a few of us are altogether on the evolutionary up-grade, or altogether on the corresponding down-grade, it will be difficult to discover a eugenic endeavour with a perfectly clear issue. There will almost always be a dysgenic fly in the eugenic ointment. But to have prolonged the life of a constitutionally doomed infant may not be too heavy a tax to pay on the profit of having saved a score or half a hundred from gratuitous enfeeblement of life. What "Mothers' and Babies' Clubs" are doing in thousands of cases is removing unnecessary extraneous inhibitions and giving infants of decently vigorous stock a fair chance. The constituencies doubtless differ in racial value in different

places, but in many instances it is misleading to think of them as in any serious degree biologically inferior to those of the "upper strata," where "Mothers' and Babies Clubs" are also required, though of another pattern. The "lower strata" babies are often not "inferior" but simply different; the "upper strata" babies are often not "superior," but simply different. That the "lower strata" babies, who are brought by their mothers to the clubs, are often unnecessarily hindered by modificational handicaps and unnecessarily depressed by the limitations of the available "nurture" has been proved experimentally by the results of more enlightened care. It should be clearly understood that in the majority of cases the hints and help that the mothers get—the deliverance from fatalism not the least valuable—cannot be said to determine individual survival, but simply whether the child, who is usually going to survive in any case, will be invigorated or enfeebled. Finally, it is to be hoped that no one will be restrained from "Baby Weeks" all the year round by any dread of interfering with "summer diarrhoea," and similar so-called selective agencies, whose eliminative operations are certainly not eugenic winnowing.

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Dr. Rentoul, of Liverpool, sends us, in a letter, the following interesting particulars concerning legislation in the United States with regard to venereal diseases:—

"Against Marrying of Venereals.—1. State of Indiana. Act of March 6th, 1905. S. 2: No licence to marry shall be issued when either of the contracting parties is an imbecile, epileptic, of unsound mind, nor to any male person who is or has been within five years an inmate of any county asylum or home for indigent persons, unless it satisfactorily appears that the cause of such condition has been removed, and that such male applicant is able to support a family and likely to continue so, nor shall any licence issue when either of the contracting parties is afflicted with a transmissible disease, or at the time of making application is under the influence of an intoxicating liquor or narcotic drug. S. 4: Refused person can appeal to circuit court. S. 6: 500 dols. fine for wrongfully issuing a licence. S. 7: Parson marrying such without licence fined 500 dols.

"2. State of Oregon, February 26th, 1913.—S. 1: Applicant for permit to re-marry must file a certificate from an authorised physician, made under oath, that the male applicant is free from contagious or infectious venereal disease. S. 2: Physician making false statement shall lose his diploma. S. 3: Fee for doctor's certificate, 2.50 dols.

"3. North Dakota, 1913.—S. 1: No woman under the age of 45, or man of any age, except he marry a woman over 45, either of whom is . . . afflicted with pulmonary tuberculosis in its advanced stage, or of any contagious venereal disease, shall hereafter inter-marry, or marry any other person within this State. S. 2: Penal for clergyman to join in marriage such persons. S. 5: Fee for doctor's certificate, 2 dols. S. 6: Fine for illegally joining in marriage 50 to 500 dols. or imprisonment for 30 days.

"4. State of Pennsylvania, 1913.—S. 1: No permit to marry if either of the contracting parties is afflicted with transmissible disease. S. 4: Applicant may appeal to a court free of expenses.

"5. State of Michigan, 1905.—S. 6: No insane person, idiot, imbecile, or person who has been afflicted with syphilis or gonorrhoea, and has not been cured of the same, shall be capable of contracting marriage. Certificate of being cured must be signed by two qualified physicians. Anyone aiding or assisting such to marry may be fined up to 1,000 dols., or to imprisonment up to five years.

"6 and 7. Washington and Utah have similar laws."